Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

280.37
Ag82
Cop. 2

SERVICE

USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE · OFFICE OF INFORMATION · WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

March 1968 No. 50

SURVEY RESULTS EXPAND NUTRITION EDUCATION

Shift in Food Habits. A preliminary report on "Dietary Levels of Households in the United States" has been released as part of the 1965 nationwide survey of food consumption conducted by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The study indicates that despite higher income, and the fact that Americans may choose from among the greatest abundance and variety of wholesome nutritious food at the lowest real cost of anytime in our history there has resulted a somewhat adverse shift in food habits and some change in national dietary levels, according to a statement by Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman.

A comparison of data obtained in the 1965 survey and in a 1955 survey shows that 50 percent of the 1965 households had good diets compared to 60 percent in 1955. There was a higher percentage of poor diets in 1965...20 percent compared to 15 percent.

As a result of study findings, Secretary Freeman is expanding the Department's nutrition education program. The program will be directed to children and young families, low income families, the aged and the general population. Chiefly responsible for the decline in the percent of good diets over the 10 year period is the decreased use of milk and milk products, and vegetables and fruits, the most important sources of calcium, vitamin A value, and ascorbic acid.

A partial answer to adding amounts of needed nutrients to the diet would include enrichment of flour, breads and cereals. Secretary Freeman is asking millers and the bakery industry to review the possibility of uniform enrichment, which might also include calcium--now an optional ingredient. There is also a possibility of enriching dried milk for domestic use, he said.

Quality of U. S. Diets by Income

	Good	Fair	Poor
under $3000	37%	27%	36%
$3000-$4999	43%	33%	24%
$5000-$6999	53%	29%	18%
$7000-$9999	56%	32%	12%
$10,000 & over	63%	28%	9%

U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY
JUL 21 1969
CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

FLAME RESISTANT

Cotton Flote. A low-cost flame-retardant finish for Cotton Flote, an improved cotton batting, is under research by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Cotton Flote, developed by USDA's Agricultural Research Service was recently introduced to industry. It is recapturing some of the markets cotton batting has lost to synthetic materials for use in upholstery and bedding. An effective, low-cost flame-resistant treatment that would not require major changes in production would add safety to the other desirable qualities of Cotton Flote. One of the best available flame retardants for cotton fabrics would increase costs by 25 percent and would rule out economy as a major advantage of cotton batting over other padding materials. Scientists are seeking less expensive treatments that would be effective and retain the other good qualities of Cotton Flote. One experimental treatment involves applying a urea-phosphate complex, along with chemicals that make the batting hold its shape and remain resilient through long use. All the chemicals can be sprayed on simultaneously at the time the batting is made. If a suitable treatment is found, automotive, furniture, and bedding markets could use as much as 750 million pounds of the new batting and production could reach 200 million pounds by 1969.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS

Did You Know? Homeowners can cause damage to electric motors by allowing the voltage of the line to drop. If you overload your electric circuits--or use a fuse too large for the circuit--it can also create a hazard. Did you know a 100-watt bulb gives out twice as much light as two 50-watt bulbs? For maximum light, use one bulb of higher wattage, not two alike. Don't use extension cords for an electric iron or electric heater, but, if you must--be sure to get a heater-type cord. For power tools, use a special three-wire type cord that provides for grounding. This information is found in the Department's publication A Consumer's Guide to USDA Services, available free from the Office of Information, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250. Please include your zip code.

HOUSEHOLD PROBLEMS

Controlling Bacteria. Neither water temperatures nor detergents can be relied on to reduce the number of bacteria in fabrics to a safe level in home laundering according to U. S. Department of Agriculture researchers. Bacteria--to some degree--flush down the drain with wash or rinse water. But, many others stay in the fabric. Both time and temperatures are important in killing bacteria. Washing machine cycles usually are not long enough even with hot water to solve the problem. A disinfectant--used regularly when there is sickness in the home or when laundry facilities are shared--is the most practical solution. Products suggested include quaternary disinfectants and liquid chlorine disinfectants for use in hot, warm or cold water laundering and pine oil disinfectants and phenolic disinfectants for use in hot or warm water.

CLUB PROGRAM AIDS

Program Chairmen. Looking for an idea? A new color slide set "Save Our Land" has been produced by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The 48 slide series shows how our survival depends on our two basic resources--soil and water. Soil conservation affects home owners, farmers, consumers--all of us. The slide set shows a multitude of recreational activities made possible by the government's conservation programs. The set is offered for $5.50 by the Photography Division, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250.

WATCH YOUR CREDIT

Shop Around...And Compare. You can shop around for credit the same as you would shop for any other service. The cost of credit may vary from 7.4 percent to 30 percent simple annual rate. The U. S. Department of Agriculture has a quick credit guide to help you understand credit charges. USDA economists suggest that you shop around to find where the credit rate is the lowest. Know what you're paying for credit. Read and understand the contract. Never sign a contract with spaces left blank. Be sure the contract tells exactly what you are buying and what rate you will be paying for it. More helpful information is available in the pocket sized Consumer's Quick Credit Guide, available for 5 cents from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402.

LAWN MAINTENANCE

Time to Fertilize. It's getting time to "think" lawn again! The U. S. Department of Agriculture says early spring is the time to fertilize blue grass, fescues, and other cool-season grasses. Organic, or urea-form, nitrogen fertilizer may be used in the spring to prevent burning. It will also reduce over-stimulation of the grass and provide for a more continuous supply of nitrogen. Do not apply fertilizer, particularly an inorganic fertilizer, when the grass leaves are wet. Water the lawn immediately after applying fertilizer to prevent burning of the grass plants.

RESEARCH

New Heating Pattern. A new home-heating system--a peripheral circulation system--has been developed by a U. S. Department of Agriculture scientist. It distributes and circulates only the desired amount of heat needed to keep a house comfortable. Insufficient air movement and unequal air distribution are the problems associated with conventional forced air and radiant systems. A well-defined flow pattern is the theory behind the new system. It works with all conventional heat sources. With this system, which is relatively inexpensive, no radiators must be used, and drafts and dust deposits are kept to a minimum. However, at this time, it is most adaptable for one story houses with crawl spaces. More research is needed to determine the adaptability to multi-story homes and homes with basements.

SAFETY FIRST

Pesticides Protection. Pesticides offer a convenient, effective, and economical way to fight pests in our homes and gardens as well as on farms, in forests, and outdoor recreational areas. But--they must be used safely so as not to harm people, animals or their environment. To help provide this protection, the U. S. Department of Agriculture regulates the sale and labeling of all pesticide products marketed in interstate commerce. It requires that all pesticide labels carry correct and adequate directions for use and clear precautions to guard against misuse. This built-in protection process is described in a new pamphlet "Pesticides Registration...How It Protects You." PA. 835. It is now available from the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250.

PEOPLE/OPPORTUNITY IMBALANCE

Population Shift. Only 1 in 20 Americans were city dwellers back in 1790. Today, 14 in 20 are, largely because as cities grew they offered more work--more hope. But the tide may be turning to a time of rural opportunity, and if it is, the change could relieve both the overcrowding in and around the cities and spotty economy that has long pocketed rural areas. A recent booklet, Communities of Tomorrow, published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture outlines the potential for this rural alternative in solving the nation's people/opportunity imbalance. It notes what has been done, what can be done, when functional, multicounty communities blend the economic and cultural opportunities of urban living with space and beauty of the countryside.

GUIDE FOR CONSUMERS

How to Cook Lamb. A new guide for consumers on the use of lamb in family meals is now being offered by the Department of Agriculture. Once a seasonal meat, lamb was often associated with springtime. Flavorful lamb is now available throughout the year and is rich in essential body-building protein, in iron, and the B vitamins. Tips on selecting quality lamb, a guide to storing and directions on cooking are offered in Lamb in Family Meals, Home and Garden Bulletin No. 124, Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402. Price: 15 cents.

PICK THE PLENTIFULS

Shop Wisely. Peanuts and peanut products will be good buys in March, according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Other plentifuls will include eggs, milk and dairy products, pork, potatoes, and dry split peas.

For information about items in this issue, write Shirley E. Wagener, Editor, SERVICE, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Information, Special Reports Division, Washington, D. C. 20250.